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# Montana Motor Carriers Association

Max S. Baucus

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Senator \* or Department\*: **BAUCUS**

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MONTH/YEAR of Records\*: **September-1984**

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(1) Subject\*: **Appropriations/Budget**

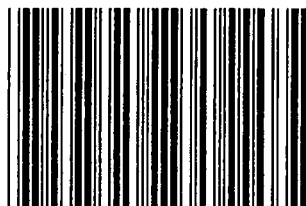
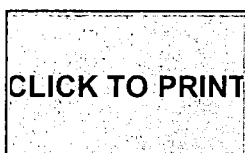
(select subject from controlled vocabulary, if your office has one)

(2) Subject\* **Montana Motor Carriers Association**

DOCUMENT DATE\*: **09/14/1984**

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\* "required information"



BAUCUS

STATEMENT OF SENATOR MAX BAUCUS  
MONTANA MOTOR CARRIERS ASSOCIATION  
GREAT FALLS, MONTANA  
SEPTEMBER 14, 1984

THANK YOU FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO BE WITH YOU THIS MORNING.  
I ESPECIALLY WANT TO THANK BEN HAYDAHL, MIKE RICE, AND THE MANY  
OTHERS HERE THAT KEPT IN TOUCH WITH ME DURING THE SENATE'S  
CONSIDERATION OF THE DEFICIT REDUCTION ACT. I VALUE YOUR ADVICE  
AND I APPRECIATE YOUR PATIENCE.

TODAY'S CHALLENGES

AMERICAN HISTORIAN WILLIAM WOODWARD HAS OBSERVED:

"THE TURNING POINT OF LIVES ARE NOT THE GREAT MOMENTS.  
THE REAL CRISES ARE OFTEN CONCEALED IN OCCURRENCES SO TRIVIAL  
IN APPEARANCE THAT THEY PASS UNOBSERVED."

WE ARE AT SUCH A QUIET TURNING POINT TODAY.

WE ARE NOT AT WAR.

WE ARE NOT FACING CATASTROPHE.

BUT WE ARE BEING QUIETLY, BUT SERIOUSLY CHALLENGED:

O OUR FARMERS, RANCHERS, BUSINESSES, AND WORKING PEOPLE ARE  
CHALLENGED BY SKY-HIGH INTEREST RATES THAT ARE CREEPING HIGHER  
AGAIN.

O OUR FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS CHALLENGED BY A BUDGET THAT'S IN

THE RED AND OUT OF CONTROL.

O OUR BUSINESSES ARE CHALLENGED BY FIERCE FOREIGN COMPETITION.

O OUR ELDERLY ARE CHALLENGED BY SKYROCKETING HEALTH COSTS.

O OUR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN ARE CHALLENGED BY A NUCLEAR ARMS RACE THAT SHOWS NO SIGNS OF SLOWING DOWN.

THESE ARE ALL SERIOUS CHALLENGES.

AND THE CENTRAL CHOICE WE FACE IN 1984 IS WHETHER WE TAKE THEM ON...

..OR WHETHER WE DON'T.

LET ME PUT IT ANOTHER WAY.

THE 1980'S CAN BECOME THE DECADE OF NEW SOLUTIONS... OR IT CAN BECOME THE DECADE OF LOST OPPORTUNITIES.

THE CHOICE IS OURS.

### INTEREST RATES AND THE BUDGET DEFICIT

THE CHOICE IS ESPECIALLY CLEAR WHEN WE LOOK AT INTEREST RATES.

THE FEDERAL BUDGET DEFICIT IS GROWING BY \$21 MILLION AN HOUR.

IF WE DON'T ACT, IN THE NEXT SIX YEARS THE NATIONAL DEBT WILL DOUBLE...TO OVER \$3 TRILLION.

THAT DEBT:

- O DRIVES UP INTEREST RATES;
- O FORCES MORE BANKRUPTCIES;
- O PREVENTS AMERICAN RANCHERS AND FARMERS FROM COMPETING  
IN WORLD MARKETS;
- O INFLATES THE DOLLAR SO MUCH THAT CANADIANS ARE LESS  
ABLE TO AFFORD A VISIT TO OUR STATE AND OUR TOURISM  
INDUSTRY IS HURT.

EVERYDAY WE REFUSE TO COME TO GRIPS WITH THE PROBLEM, IT GET  
WORSE.

THAT HURTS US.

BUT IT HURTS THE GENERATIONS TO COME EVEN MORE.

IT WAS PRESIDENT THOMAS JEFFERSON WHO WROTE:

"THE QUESTION WHETHER ONE GENERATION HAS THE RIGHT TO  
BIND ANOTHER BY THE DEFICIT IT IMPOSES IS A QUESTION OF SUCH  
CONSEQUENCE AS TO PLACE IT AMONG THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES  
OF GOVERNMENT. WE SHOULD CONSIDER OURSELVES UNAUTHORIZED TO  
SADDLE POSTERITY WITH OUR DEBTS, AND MORALLY BOUND TO PAY  
THEM OURSELVES."

JEFFERSON WAS RIGHT.

WE IN AMERICA HAD BETTER START LISTENING TO HIM.

WE'VE GOT TO BUCKLE DOWN.

AND WE HAVE TO BE WILLING TO PUT OUR DIFFERENCES ASIDE UNTIL

THE JOB IS DONE.

THE FREEZE PROPOSAL

THAT IS WHY I HAVE JOINED THREE OTHER SENATORS -- TWO REPUBLICANS AND A DEMOCRAT -- TO CALL FOR A ONE-YEAR BUDGET FREEZE ON ALL FEDERAL SPENDING.

THIS BIPARTISAN SPENDING FREEZE IS THE KIND OF SOLUTION WE NEED:

- O A SOLUTION THAT TRANSCENDS PARTISAN BICKERING;
- O A SOLUTION THAT TRANSCENDS THE PLEAS OF SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS;
- O A SOLUTION THAT GETS DEFICITS AND INTEREST RATES DOWN NOW, NOT SEVEN YEARS FROM NOW.

I'M PROUD OF OUR FREEZE PROPOSAL.

WHILE OTHERS ARE TRYING TO ASSESS BLAME FOR THE DEFICITS, WE ARE TRYING TO REDUCE THEM.

WHILE OTHERS ARE PROMOTING POLITICAL "ACID TESTS" TO UNDERScore THEIR DISTASTE FOR DEFICITS, WE ARE ACTUALLY DOING SOMETHING ABOUT IT.

AND OTHERS HAVE JOINED US.

JOHN MELCHER HAS COSPONSORED THE SPENDING FREEZE.

AND IT IS NOW ENDORSED BY:

- o THE U.S. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
- o THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF INDEPENDENT BUSINESSES
- o THE AMERICAN FARM BUREAU
- o THE NATIONAL GRANGE
- o THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MANUFACTURERS, AND
- o THE NATIONAL TAXPAYERS UNION

OBVIOUSLY, THE SUPPORT FOR THE SPENDING FREEZE IS BUILDING.

I AM SORRY TO HAVE TO REPORT THAT SOME SENATORS, OF BOTH PARTIES, HAVE SHIED AWAY FROM OUR APPROACH.

SOME COMPLAIN IT'S TOO TOUGH ON SENIORS AND VETERANS.

SOME COMPLAIN IT'S TOO TOUGH ON THE PENTAGON.

BUT AS I TRAVEL AROUND MONTANA, I FIND THAT MOST PEOPLE ARE SO WORRIED ABOUT THESE DEFICITS, THAT THEY ARE WILLING TO HELP CONTRIBUTE TO THE SOLUTION AS LONG AS THEY ARE CONVINCED EVERYONE ELSE WILL TOO.

I KNOW A ONE-YEAR SPENDING FREEZE IS TOUGH MEDICINE.

BUT I BELIEVE THAT MONTANANS, AND ALL AMERICANS, ARE LOOKING FOR TOUGH POLITICAL LEADERSHIP, AND THAT IS PRECISELY WHAT WE ARE TRYING TO PROVIDE.

LATER THIS MONTH, SEVERAL OF US WILL BE JOINING IN OFFERING AN AMENDMENT TO THE DEBT LIMIT BILL THAT WILL HELP KEEP THE SPENDING FREEZE PROPOSAL BEFORE THE CONGRESS.

OUR AMENDMENT WOULD REQUIRE THAT THE SPENDING FREEZE WOULD AUTOMATICALLY BECOME THE PENDING BUSINESS BEFORE THE CONGRESS IF INTEREST RATES START RISING AGAIN.

IN THIS WAY, WE WON'T LET CONGRESS KEEP PUTTING OFF THE TOUGH SOLUTIONS WE NEED.

I WANT TO ASSURE YOU THAT I WILL CONTINUE TO FIGHT FOR THE BIPARTISAN SPENDING FREEZE, AND I'M CONVINCED THAT WITH HARD WORK, WE WILL ENACT IT.

#### THE "DOWN-PAYMENT" PACKAGE

SOME OF YOU MAY HAVE NOTICED THAT I WAS THE ONLY MEMBER OF THE MONTANA DELEGATION THAT SUPPORTED THE DEFICIT REDUCTION BILL WHICH PRESIDENT REAGAN SIGNED LAST MONTH.

THAT LEGISLATION, KNOWN AS THE "DOWN-PAYMENT" ON THE DEFICIT, WAS NOT A PERFECT BILL.

CERTAINLY THERE ARE SOME PROVISIONS IN THE BILL THAT I DON'T LIKE.

BUT, WE CAN'T KEEP TALKING ABOUT THESE DEFICITS, AND NOT SUPPORT THE TOUGH MEASURES IT WILL TAKE TO REDUCE THEM.

SO, I FELT THAT I HAD TO PUT MY VOTE WHERE MY MOUTH WAS.

AT THE SAME TIME, WE CAN'T AFFORD TO SIT IDLY BY, AND PERMIT



EASTERNERS TO RAM THROUGH PROVISIONS THAT HURT MONTANA'S INTERESTS.

WE HAVE TO FIGHT TO PROTECT OUR INTERESTS.

LET ME GIVE YOU A COUPLE OF EXAMPLES.

### TRUCK TAXES

THE SEVEN-FOLD INCREASE IN HEAVY USE TAXES PUT IN PLACE BY THE SURFACE TRANSPORTATION ACT IN 1982 HIT MONTANA PARTICULARLY HARD.

I JOINED OTHERS THAT KNEW THERE HAD TO BE A BETTER WAY IN MAKING SURE THESE NEW TAXES WOULD NOT GO INTO EFFECT UNTIL OVER A YEAR LATER. WE WERE BUYING TIME.

WITH THIS TIME WE WERE ABLE TO FASHION A PAY-AS-YOU-GO PROPOSAL TO TAKE THE PLACE OF THE BURDENSOME TAXES CONTAINED IN THE STAA. THIS CHANGE WAS ENACTED IN THE DEFICIT REDUCTION ACT.

THESE SUBSTITUTE TAXES ARE NOT PAINLESS. NO TAX I HAVE HEARD OF EVER IS. BUT, RAISING THE SAME AMOUNT OF MONEY BASED ON ACTUAL HIGHWAY USE DOES SEEM MORE FAIR AND EQUITABLE TO ME.

### GRANDFATHER CLAUSE

STILL, WE ARE DISCRIMINATED AGAINST IN MONTANA AND THE WEST.

MOST OF YOU HERE PROBABLY TRAVEL OVER 100,000 MILES A YEAR WITH YOUR TRUCKS. THAT MEANS YOU WILL PAY AT LEAST AS MUCH IN ANNUAL TAXES AS YOU WOULD HAVE UNDER THE STAA.

BECAUSE OF THE VAST DISTANCES IN THE WEST, MANY STATES, INCLUDING MONTANA, HAVE SET GROSS WEIGHT LIMITS OVER THE NEW STANDARD NATIONAL WEIGHT LIMIT OF 80,000 POUNDS.

THIS, IN PART, HELPS COMPENSATE FOR THE HIGHER MILEAGE YOU COVER IN THE WEST. BUT THE FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION HAS LITTLE UNDERSTANDING OF THE DILEMMA YOU FACE.

BACK IN 1982, WHEN THE STAA SET A NATIONAL WEIGHT STANDARD OF 80,000 POUNDS, I FOUGHT FOR LANGUAGE THAT WOULD ALLOW STATES TO CONTINUE TO SET THEIR WEIGHT STANDARDS UNDER THE SO-CALLED "GRANDFATHER CLAUSE."

NOW THE FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION IS QUESTIONING THE VERY CLEAR INTENT OF THE ACTION THAT SENATOR SYMMS AND I AGREED ON IN THE ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC-WORKS COMMITTEE.

I WANT TO MAKE A PLEDGE TO YOU THIS MORNING THAT I WILL DO WHATEVER IT TAKES TO INSURE THAT MONTANA IS ABLE TO CONTINUE TO OPERATE UNDER THE GRANDFATHER CLAUSE.

THE HIGHWAY BILL

THE HIGHWAY BILL NOW BEFORE CONGRESS IS ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF MONTANA'S INTERESTS BEING THREATENED.

THE HOUSE -- WHICH IS NATURALLY MORE URBAN-ORIENTED -- HAS ONCE AGAIN CHANGED THE INTERSTATE 4R ALLOCATION FORMULA. SENATOR SPECTER PLANS TO OFFER A SIMILAR AMENDMENT IN THE SENATE.

IF WE ALLOW THIS CHANGE TO TAKE PLACE MONTANA WOULD LOSE \$29 MILLION IN FEDERAL HIGHWAY FUNDS.

WE CANNOT LET THIS HAPPEN.

I HAVE ANNOUNCED THAT I WILL JOIN SENATOR DOMENICI FROM THE ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE IN FILIBUSTERING ANY BILL THAT CONTAINS THIS FORMULA CHANGE.

#### WATERWAY USER FEES

ONE FINAL EXAMPLE OF LEGISLATION THAT WOULD HURT MONTANA IS THE ADMINISTRATION'S ATTEMPT TO RAISE USER FEES FOR INLAND WATERWAY OPERATIONS.

I HAVE OFTEN BEEN ASKED WHY A SENATOR FROM MONTANA -- A STATE WITH NO NAVIGABLE WATERWAY -- IS SO INTERESTED IN THIS ISSUE. THE ANSWER IS SIMPLE.

I AM FIGHTING TO MAINTAIN THE TRUCK/BARGE OPTION OF TRANSPORTING MONTANA GRAIN INTO THE EXPORT MARKETS. THE

TRUCK/BARGE OPTION IS THE ONLY COMPETITION FOR THE RAILROADS WE HAVE IN MONTANA.

RAISING WATERWAY USER FEES WOULD MAKE IT MUCH EASIER FOR THE RAILROADS TO UNDERCUT THE RATES OF THE TRUCK/BARGE OPTION.

LEADERSHIP AND BI-PARTISANSHIP

AS YOUR SENATOR, I WILL CONTINUE TO PROVIDE TOUGH AND EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP:

O THAT MEANS FIGHTING EFFECTIVELY FOR MONTANA.

O THAT MEANS TAKING RISKS AND MAKING TOUGH DECISIONS.

AND IT MEANS AVOIDING PARTISANSHIP AND RIGID IDEOLOGY.

DEMOCRATS AND REPUBLICANS ALIKE UNDERSTAND THE PROBLEM PRESENTED BY OUR STAGGERING FEDERAL BUDGET DEFICITS.

DEMOCRATS AND REPUBLICANS ALIKE UNDERSTAND THE IMPLICATIONS OF OUR NATION'S DECLINING POSITION IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMPETITION.

DEMOCRATS AND REPUBLICANS ALIKE RECOGNIZE THE IMPEDING BANKRUPTCY OF OUR NATION'S MEDICARE SYSTEM.

BUT ALL OF THESE CHALLENGES DEFY PARTISAN APPROACHES.

PARTISAN RHETORIC DOESN'T EXPLAIN THESE PROBLEMS.

AND PARTISAN PROPOSALS WON'T SOLVE THEM.

THESE PROBLEMS ARE SO SERIOUS, THESE CHALLENGES ARE SO GREAT, THAT WE CAN ONLY SOLVE THEM BY PUTTING OUR DIFFERENCES ASIDE AND WORKING TOGETHER TO FIND EFFECTIVE SOLUTIONS.

THAT IS WHAT OUR COMMON WELL-BEING REQUIRES.

### CONCLUSION

1984 IS A PIVOTAL YEAR.

NOT BECAUSE WE ARE STARING CATASTROPHE IN THE FACE --

WE AREN'T.

BUT, ~~THIS STATE AND THIS COUNTRY ARE POISED AT THE EDGE OF AN~~  
~~IMPORTANT WATERSHED~~ WE ARE FACED WITH IMPORTANT CHOICES.

.. AND WITHIN THOSE CHOICES LIE AS EXCITING A SET OF OPPORTUNITIES AS ANY GENERATION OF AMERICANS HAS HAD.

I ASK YOU TO JOIN ME IN A COMMITMENT TO SEIZE THOSE OPPORTUNITIES.

LET US NOT LOOK TO IDEOLOGY.

LET US NOT LOOK TO PARTISANSHIP.

LET US LOOK TO THE FUTURE.

AND LET US WORK TOGETHER TO LEAD MONTANA FORWARD.

THANK YOU.